partly writ by Horace Walpole

ablest Pamphlet for & against Excise
Bolingbroke says it is partly written by
Swift

Tracts V. 7.

THE

RISE and FALL

Of the late Projected

EXCISE,

Impartially consider'd.

(Price One Shilling.)

writ by Concanen, Atty General
of Jamaica, dictated by
Horace Walpole, this with the
"Review" in answer contain the
whole pro & con merits of the Case

The "Rise and Fall" was written by Concannen, made Attorney General of Jamaica, and dictated by Horace Walpole. The two pamphlets, says Ralph, contain all the merits and demerits of the question.

THE

RISE and FALL

Of the late Projected

EXCISE,

Impartially Consider'd.

By a Friend to the ENGLISH CONSTITUTION.

— Remember, O my Friends, the LAWS,
The LIBERTY, *the generous Plan of Power,*
Deliver'd down by your Renowned Forefathers,
The Price of so much Blood, and never suffer
It to perish in your Hands. CATO.

LONDON:
Printed for J. PEELE, at *Locke's-Head*
in *Amen-Corner.* 1733.

THE RISE and FALL Of the late Projected EXCISE, &c.

WHEN the Mind is once heated, and the Paſſions inflamed, 'tis ſome Time before the Maxims of Reaſon can meet with a proper Regard. The late Scheme for collecting the Duties upon Wine and Tobacco being *entirely* at an End, we may *now*, 'tis to be hoped, *calmly* ſpeculate upon it, as a Matter of an indifferent Nature. The Bill for this Purpoſe having been once laid aſide in Parliament, this would prove an additional Obſtruction to it,

and muſt confirm the *Reſolution* of thoſe who were once for it, *never* to attempt it a *ſecond Time*. Had they intended to carry this Scheme into Execution, after it was known how many People were againſt it, no doubt it would have been purſued when the Bill was before the Houſe, and not brought in again loaded with the freſh Objection of having been already dropt. The Gentlemen, who have been ſo deeply cenſured upon Account of this Deſign, are of all Mankind *leaſt* likely to bring it again upon the Carpet. They well know that the *leaſt Tendency* towards it would create immediate Jealouſies among the deluded People, and raiſe freſh Alarms in the Kingdom. Perſons that entertain a favourable Opinion of the Deſign, will think the Gentlemen who lately appeared for it, have ſufficiently exerted themſelves, and run Hazard enough in its Favour. They who are really diſpleaſed with it, will have no Deſire to ſee it revived. All Apprehenſions therefore of Danger from the Gentlemen now in Power, are undoubtedly at an End. Beſides the moſt *expreſs* and *poſitive Aſſurances* to this Purpoſe, we may be convinced of it from the Nature of Things.

The

The *Scheme* itſelf, and the Advantages or Inconveniencies of it being *entirely over*, it only remains to enquire, *who* are entitled to our *Reſentments*, (if any muſt be expreſs'd upon the Occaſion) thoſe *Gentlemen* who *propoſed* this Scheme for preventing Frauds, or thoſe who, for the Sake of *Oppoſition*, would ſuffer thoſe Frauds to continue ſtill.

In order to paſs a righteous Judgment, and give our Approbation to the proper Perſons, it ſeems neceſſary to enquire into the *true* Deſign and Nature of the late Scheme. The *real* Foundation upon which the Gentlemen for the Bill proceeded, was this, and *no other*; they believed it both *reaſonable* and *beneficial* to *take off* the *heavieſt* of the Duties we now lie under, if this could be done, *without* laying a *new* Tax, meerly by collecting the *proper* Duties upon Wine and Tobacco already paid by the People in the Price, while the *Publick* is *greatly defrauded.*

The *Nation* confeſſedly *ſuffers* very *largely* by many conſiderable Frauds in the Duties upon *Wine* and *Tobacco.* The

general

general and *looſe Examination* theſe Goods paſs under at the *Cuſtom-Houſe*, often in a great Hurry, when a large *Fleet* arrives at the ſame time, has by no Means proved an effectual Method to collect the whole Duty upon them. Length of Time, and repeated Experiments, have introduced various Practices injurious to the Publick, which are now carried on *there* with great Skill and Dexterity. The *Frauds* and *Abuſes* that do already appear from the *Report of the Committee* appointed to enquire into them, are very *extenſive* and *important*. How many other Frauds, that from the *Nature* of them, which is to lie *deep* and *cloſe*, muſt have eſcaped the Notice of a *publick Committee*, 'tis impoſſible to ſay; but ſure they muſt be very numerous, that Gentlemen, not at all converſant in ſuch unjuſt Practices, ſhould in the ſhort Time allotted to their Inquiry, be able to bring ſo many of them to Light, ſuch as, The *Frauds* committed at the *Importation* of Tobacco, by ſetting down in the Land-waiter's Book, by which the Duty is computed and paid, *leſs* Weight than the ſeveral Hogſheads do really weigh, even to the gaining above Thirty Thouſand Pounds Weight Duty-free in one

one Ship. The *Frauds* at *Exportation*, by ſhipping corrupt or damaged Tobacco, or Tobacco mix'd with Dirt, Rubbiſh, and Sand, by ſhipping Stalks alone, and thus gaining from the Publick an *unfair Drawback*; eſpecially by endorſing on the Back of their Cockets *greater* Weights than the Hogſheads actually contain, and this to a very large Amount. Thus *doubly* defrauding the Nation, by *ſhort Weights* at the *Entry*, and *over Weights* at the *Exportation*; as alſo by *running* Tobacco, by *relanding* it, by that Complication of *Fraud* and *Perjury*, the diſcharging *old Bonds* by *new Importations*, and by ſeveral other Methods of Cheating; all which appear in the *Report* upon proper and ſubſtantial Evidence; and to all which the late Scheme was intended as the *moſt* and indeed *only* effectual Cure.

'Tis the ſame with reſpect to the other Commodity: *Many Cargoes* of *real Wine* are *run* upon all the Coaſts of *Britain*, and *vaſt Quantities* of ſomething *called Wine*, *brewed* by Coopers and Vintners, both which they ſell at the *current Price*, though *no Duty* was *paid* for them.

'Tis, I know, sometimes *pretended* there are few or no Frauds committed, and of Course the Publick could gain but little by the preventing of them. The Misfortune of this Pretence is, that with respect to *Tobacco*, no Person who enjoys his *Senses* can possibly give Credit to it after what had passed in Parliament, and what has been so fully stated in the *Report*; and with respect to *Wine*, is there a Man in *England* who believes that *half* of the *common Draught* of *Taverns* is really *Wine*? Or that the *wretched Stuff* we meet with in all *Country Inns*, ever paid *Duty* at the *Custom-House*? And of what is genuine Wine, how large a Part is *run* by Smuglers, 'tis not easy to determine.

What a *noble Relief* from other Taxes did it fairly promise, if the Duty that is received by the *Dealers* for all this *fraudulent* Tobacco, and all this *factitious* or *run* Wine was honestly paid to the Publick? The Frauds that are already known, besides what are committed in dark Recesses, and in Ways yet undiscovered, are sufficient to convince every reasonable Man, what *vast*

Savings

Savings might have been made *to the Nation*, had these *cheating* Methods been *prevented*. This is confirmed in an authentick Piece published by *Francklin* himself, where the *Member of Parliament*, who is said to *write* the Letter, endeavours to prove, that the extending the Excise-Laws to Wine and Tobacco would have been *destructive of Parliament*, and fatal to the Constitution; *destroyed*, says he, the *very Being of Parliaments*; by raising so much Money, (he names *Five Hundred Thousand Pounds*) the King would have had no Occasion to call a Parliament. Unfortunately indeed for his Argument, the *Profits* that would have arisen from the proposed Method of collecting these Duties were *no Part* of the *Civil List*, but to be applied by Parliament; and the present Customs might as well be illegally seized for the Purposes of Arbitrary Power, as any Increase of them. However, here is a plain Confession of this important Truth, that the proposed Method of collecting these Duties would undoubtedly have raised great Sums for the Service of the Publick. The Gentlemen for the Bill were of the same Opinion as to the Produce of it, being persuaded, as all Mankind must be, that

the Prevention of theſe *extenſive Frauds* upon *both* Commodities muſt have been attended with that good Effect.

This *Increaſe* of the Revenue would have given effectual *Relief* in ſuch *Taxes* as ſhould appear to the Legiſlature moſt *unequal*, or *moſt heavy*. The very firſt *Appearance* of this Scheme looks ſo *agreeable*, that it is no Wonder Gentlemen, who wiſhed well to their Country, ſhould be pleaſed with it. It ſeems ſo *reaſonable* in itſelf to *demand* the *Taxes* from thoſe who conſtantly *receive* them, and this *Increaſe* of the *Revenue* would have been ſo uſeful to the *Publick*, that a Scheme built upon this Foundation muſt have an inviting Aſpect. But ſuppoſing it poſſible they might be miſtaken in their Opinion (Gentlemen on the other Side are equally fallible) yet ſurely the endeavouring to levy the whole Duty upon theſe *Foreign Commodities*, which may be properly conſider'd as Articles of *Luxury* ; an Attempt to prevent injurious and fraudulent Practices in order to give *Relief* from *Taxes* that are felt moſt *ſevere*, is highly commendable. Had *other* Perſons *proved* ſuch *Frauds*, and the *Gentlemen* in the *Adminiſtration*

niſtration oppoſed any *Remedy* offered, without endeavouring to make it practicable, *their Conduct*, I am ſure, would have been *loudly cenſured*, and themſelves *accuſed* of *dividing* the *Spoil*. Men in Power might have found great Advantages in *conniving* at theſe fraudulent Practices, while the endeavouring to prevent them, as it was eaſy to foreſee, would expoſe them to the *Rage* of thoſe who were *Gainers* by them, and all others whom they could influence.

Their *Intereſt* and their *Eaſe* lay on the other Side the Queſtion, but the Friends to the Bill choſe the moſt troubleſome, becauſe they thought it moſt beneficial to their Country.

For it was conſidered, that the *Landed Intereſt*, after having contributed ſo *many Millions*, was juſtly entitled to ſome Relief from a Tax ſo heavy in itſelf, and ſo unequally laid in different Counties, and too often ſtrictly levied upon thoſe who are leaſt able to pay it.

How many Country Gentlemen, of ancient and honourable Birth, from One Hundred to a Thouſand Pounds *per Annum*,

num, unwilling to live below their Rank, and obliged to charge their Eſtates for younger Children, diſtreſſed at the ſame Time with the heavy Weight of a conſtant Land-Tax, have ſeen themſelves and Families reduced to the loweſt Ebb? Nay, it is to be feared, that the Revolution Intereſt and the preſent Eſtabliſhment have loſt ſome of its Landed Friends, who merely from the Preſſures of the Land-Tax have been induced to join with *modern* Patriots and *Jacobites*. Such Perſons therefore, for the Sake of the Publick as well as themſelves, called aloud for ſome Relief. And no Relief could be more properly given, than by preventing Frauds in thoſe who contribute nothing to the Land-Tax.

The Clergy alſo, ſeveral Thouſands of whom hold Livings under Fifty Pounds *per Annum*, as *Gentlemen* of a *liberal Education*, and who are *ſubject* to ſeveral *other Taxations*, were conſidered as proper Objects of Regard, and muſt have received conſiderable *Eaſe* in their Taxes, had the late *Deſign* been carried into *Execution*.

It

It was hoped to, that if this Scheme had ſucceeded, it might in Time have contributed to leſſen or remove ſome other Taxes which lye heavy upon the Poor: And therefore theſe Gentlemen alſo thought it extremely hard, that the *mechanical* and *labouring* Part of the Kingdom, (whilſt thoſe who commit Frauds, eſcape Taxes) ſhould pay a Tax upon *Soap* and *Candles*, for which, with a Duty upon *Leather*, (all collected by an *Exciſe*) they are indebted to that *uniform* and *upright Stateſman*, who has now *oppoſed* their *Relief* by an *Inland* Duty upon *Foreign* Commodities, under a Law vaſtly more favourable to the Trader, than That his Adminiſtration laid upon the *Neceſſaries* of Life, Neceſſaries of our *own Manufacture*; who, becauſe he was the Author of laying thoſe Taxes on, has now artfully miſrepreſented and unjuſtly loaded the Means to take them off. 'Tis impoſſible to miſtake the Man, that *pious* Patriot, who had the ſame Regard for *Religion* when he cried out the *Danger of the Church*, as he has for *Liberty*, when he exclaims againſt eaſing the Subject by preventing Frauds.

But

But as vaſt *Sums* of Money are by the *preſent* Manner of collecting *loſt* to the Publick, *i. e.* to *every Individual* who pays *other* Taxes, it was thought by Gentlemen, who wiſhed to prevent Frauds, that if theſe *Duties* were *fairly paid* by Perſons who always *exact* them from their *Cuſtomers*, it would yield effectual Relief from Taxes that are felt moſt heavy, and might by the Wiſdom of the Nation be employed as an uſeful Means to take off the Exciſe from ſome of the *Neceſſaries* of Life, by placing it upon the *Superfluities*; and thus eaſe the *poorer* Sort of the People, by taxing the *wealthier*.

The Gentlemen for the Bill, ſenſible that the Methods at the *Cuſtom-Houſe*, where many Ships come in at once, were too looſe and general, and *vaſt Frauds* committed in *that Way* of collecting the Duty, imagined it would be *advantageous* to the *Publick*, and could *not* be *improper* in *itſelf* to put theſe *Foreign* Commodities under a *more particular Inſpection* in *Warehouſes*, and *Places of Sale*, ONLY.

Their Deſire to do the Nation Juſtice, induced them to think it could be *no unreaſonable* Step to *follow* thoſe open Delin-

Delinquents the *Smugglers* into the *Repoſitories* of their *run Goods*; nor did it appear to them any Breach of *Engliſh* Liberty to attend the Sellers of fraudulent *Tobacco*, and the *Wine-Brewer*, in thoſe Vaults and Cellars (*for no Houſe was to be entered*) where his *Compoſitions*, frequently *unwholſome*, always *fraudulent*, were clandeſtinely made; that under ſuch an Inſpection they might be charged with that Duty for the Publick, which they conſtantly exact from their Fellow-Subjects. They imagined theſe *injurious Dealers* might *properly* enough be ſubject to the *ſame Law*, which the *honeſt Brewer* of true *Engliſh Beer* is continually under, *without* any great *Trouble* to *himſelf*, *Danger* to *Liberty*, or *Inconvenience* to the *Nation*.

Under this Opinion, that a *more particular Inſpection* would be moſt *likely* to prevent *unjuſt Practices*, a Scheme was fairly *propoſed*, propoſed to the *Parliament*, *ſubject* to their *Amendment*, or to be *changed* for any other that would prevent the *acknowledged* Frauds

This was the *ſingle* Point aimed at by the Gentlemen for the Bill; it was in-

different to them by what Method the Publick gained the propoſed Advantage; they only endeavoured to fix upon the moſt conducive to that Purpoſe. So far from deſiring to lay their Countrymen under Hardſhips, or fix upon them the Calamities they have been taught to annex to the Word *Exciſe*; ſo far from this, the *Bill* itſelf, *expreſſly removes* the greateſt *Inconveniencies* that are complained of in the *preſent Laws of Exciſe*, and would have undergone in the *Committee* any Alterations conſiſtent with the publick Intereſt. So that this Bill, ſo much exclaimed againſt, eaſed the *whole Exciſe Law* in ſeveral Particulars; and by levying the juſt Duties upon foreign Commodities, it might in Time have *taken off the Exciſe entirely* from *Neceſſaries* of Home-Production.

This was the whole Deſign of the Gentlemen for the Bill, who were *only* deſirous of ſeeing *Juſtice* done to the Publick, that they might eaſe their Fellow-Subjects of ſome heavy Taxes; in what Manner this was done was to them indifferent, either in that propoſed by themſelves

or

or in any other, the moſt effectual was to them the moſt agreeable.

'Twas one valuable Recommendation of the Bill they brought in, that it was *calculated*, by leſſening the Number of Oaths, to *prevent Perjury*; which nothing has more *promoted* than the *frequent* and common *Uſe* of them. Any Man who conſiders that the *Life* and *Property* of every Subject in *England* depends upon the *Regard* that is had to an *Oath*, will think this a Matter of great Importance. For if it ſhall ever happen, (as there ſeems too great Tendency towards it) that the People in general ſhall pay little or no Regard to a ſolemn Appeal to their Maker, 'tis eaſy to foreſee that Injuſtice and Wickedneſs muſt ſoon *triumph* and defy the *publick* Juſtice of the Kingdom. 'Twas therefore a valuable Advantage, that this *Bill* greatly *leſſened* the *Number* of *Oaths* both at the *Exciſe-Office*, as it *relieved* the *Trader* from *ſwearing* to his *own Books*; and at the *Cuſtom-Houſe*, as it lodged the Commodities in publick *Warehouſes*, and ſo prevented much *Perjury* in ſwearing to the *Identity* of Goods imported and exported.

The very *Time* this Bill was *brought into the Houſe*, when the Proſpect of a new Election was ſo near, is one Proof, among many others, that the Gentlemen for it, *ſolely* intended the Service of the Publick; and hoped, by *preventing* groſs *Abuſes*, and thereby *eaſing* ſome heavy *Taxes*, to *gain* the *Favour* of their *Country*. *Unconcerned* Spectators of great *Wiſdom* and *Impartiality* are firmly of Opinion, that *this Deſign* of *honeſt Popularity* was their *greateſt Crime*, and in Truth gave Riſe to the Oppoſition. The *Inconveniencies* of the Bill might eaſily have been *obviated* in a *Committee*; but their *Opponents*, who in Caſes the *moſt unexceptionable* diſcover the *ſame* Spirit of *meer* Oppoſition, could by no Means allow them to gain the Favour of the People. If we conſider the *Methods* of *Oppoſition* employed upon this Occaſion, the *Principles* from which they proceeded appear but *too* plain.

It was *neceſſary* in the firſt Place to ſpread a *general* Terror, and thus to *inflame* and *intereſt* the whole *Body of the People*. With this View, no Pains were ſpared, no Arts omitted to affright the Nation

tion with the ſtrange GROUNDLESS Terror of a *General Exciſe*. They knew full well, that ſcarce a Man in *England* not an immediate Gainer by defrauding the Revenue, but would be pleaſed with raiſing the juſt Duties upon the Commodities under Conſideration, had he believed, what was *really* the Caſe, that there was *not the leaſt Intention* to *extend* the Exciſe farther. But ſuch a Perſuaſion, how juſt ſoever, would not anſwer the Purpoſes of *certain Gentlemen*, and therefore every Artifice was employed to ſuggeſt farther Deſigns. Every Article of Life was repreſented as coming under an Exciſe; nay, the *Land* itſelf, ridiculous as it ſeems, was to be viſited by Exciſemen and regularly gauged!

All Perſons who *gained* by *cheating* the Publick (no inconſiderable Number of Men) with great Induſtry *propagated* the *Falſehood*. Perſons who were any ways diſobliged or diſappointed, embraced this Opportunity to expreſs their Reſentment. To theſe muſt be added, ſuch as hoped to be Gainers by a Change of Hands; But above all, the Jacobites and their Friends, who, it is ſaid,

at

at firſt applauded the Scheme as an uſeful Piece of Juſtice, when they obſerved ſome Diſcontent was raiſed in the Kingdom, immediately turned about and exclaimed aloud againſt the imaginary Project of a General Exciſe. Contrary to their own genuine Principles they declared for *Liberty*, in order to gain the Favour of the People, and more effectually oppoſe thoſe whom they have always found the greateſt Obſtacle to their ruinous Deſigns. *Gentlemen*, who had *Views* of *getting* into *Power*, encouraged the *Clamour*, and furniſht a continual Supply of *Scandal* in Support of it: An Inſtance, we ſee, that a Nation may be deprived of a *real* Advantage meerly by *imaginary* Fears.

The *Methods* employed to fix theſe terrible Impreſſions, plainly ſhow there was *no real* Foundation for them. Far from having the leaſt Shadow of Truth on their Side, the Contrary was very evident. It was an expreſs Part of the Scheme to *remove* the chief *Inconveniencies*, and it would have *leſſened* the *Extent* of the Exciſe. To ſupport this *uſeful* Notion of a *General Exciſe*, there was *Nothing* offered by the *Inventors* of it,

it, but *bold* Aſſertions, which were *ſtrongly affirmed* and vigorouſly *propagated* by thoſe who found it *neceſſary* to form a *powerful Party*. Not the leaſt pretended Proof of their Aſſertions; when we called for an *Argument*, they repeated *a Song*, and to enforce this produced *a Picture*.

It had been *Time enough* to raiſe *Alarms* when they found the leaſt Tendency towards a Deſign to exciſe *any Part* of our *Food*, or enter any private Houſe; but it was by much too ſoon for theſe Alarms, when it was certain there was *no other* Intention but to *regulate* the *Duty* upon *two foreign Commodities*: To regulate this Duty in the *ſame Way*, except in ſome Circumſtances more eaſy to the Trader, as had been tried with univerſal *Approbation* and great *Succeſs* upon other Articles. *Coffee* and *Chocolate* it was found by Experience produced very little while the Duty upon them was paid at the Cuſtom-Houſe; whereas, meerly by *changing* the *Manner of collecting* the *ſame* Duty, many Thouſand Pounds a Year were gained to the Publick. An Attempt to introduce the like advantagious

tagious Regulation of the Duties *already laid* upon Wine and Tobacco, where the Frauds are ſo notorious, and the Gain to the Publick muſt of Courſe have been ſo conſiderable, cannot with the leaſt Shadow of Juſtice be loaded with the Imputation of a General Exciſe; which Complaint was never heard of when a more rigorous Collection was appointed for Coffee and Chocolate, than what was lately propoſed for Wine and Tobacco.

Theſe wicked and groundleſs Clamours, raiſed with ſo much Malice, and ſcattered Abroad with ſo much Induſtry, muſt excite the Indignation of every honeſt and peaceable Man. Nor can the Authors of them have any other Excuſe for their Conduct, but the *Neceſſity* of *inventing* ſomething to propagate Diſcontent and carry on their dangerous Deſigns.

Having, by every Art the Wit of Man could deviſe, ſpread this Terror far and wide; we are next to conſider how they *improved* theſe *general Fears*, and what *Methods* of *Oppoſition* they grafted upon them.

As

As theſe Proceedings, however unuſual and important, are gloried in and recommended for future Practice, * *To be revived* (ſay the Adviſers of them) *in the ſame* VIGOROUS *Manner upon other Occaſions*: As this is the Caſe, it becomes highly neceſſary to enquire into the *Tendency* of ſuch Proceedings, and the *Influence* they have upon the *Conſtitution.*

Publick Meaſures are *only* to be influenced by the *Publick Good.* An Affectation of *Popularity*, Regard to a particular *Borough*, Fondneſs for a *Seat* in Parliament, *Envy* or *Revenge*, *Avarice* or *Ambition* are dangerous Counſellors where the Safety of the Nation is at Stake. If it ſhall ever happen (ſays a late Writer to whom I am indebted for ſome Thoughts) that publick Meaſures are influenced and directed by *any* Conſideration, *but* the *Reaſon* of Things and the *Good* of the Community, the Happineſs, the Safety of a free People, and the very Being of a well ballanced Conſtitution are at an End.

* *Craftſman*, May 12.

Gentlemen, who deliberate upon publick Affairs, are to *hear all* that can be offered upon a Subject of Debate. The Repreſentatives of trading Corporations in particular, ſhould be always willing to receive any *Information* from their Conſtituents, and learn, either from them or any other Hands, the Advantages or Diſadvantages apprehended to ariſe from any Bill depending in Parliament. But when theſe Informations ceaſe to be *meer Repreſentation*, and are changed into *poſitive Commands*; when inſtead of declaring their own Opinion, private Perſons *abſolutely direct* their Member in the Choice of his; not *meerly* furniſh him with *Arguments* to be laid before the *Houſe*, but ſtrictly *enjoin* him, without knowing what may be offered in the Courſe of a Debate, how to vote at the Cloſe of it: What Effect can this have but to *prevent* the Advantages of a *free Inquiry* and deſtroy all Liberty of Judgment, by obliging a Man to act upon Arguments which it may be he has heard ſubſtantially confuted? Let the People, where they think it needful, give *Information*, but *no Commands* to their Members. To ſend ſuch *deciſive Injunctions* is paſſing Judgment *without* a *full Hearing*, and muſt expoſe the Nation

Nation to great Inconveniencies, and at ſome Junctures may involve it in Ruin. For a Gentleman to be influenced by ſuch Commands, is in Truth to pleaſe a *few* at the Expence of the *whole*; ſhewing a greater Regard to a particular Body of Men, than to the general Intereſt of the Kingdom. 'Tis ſetting up *another* Rule of judging beſides *Arguments* and *Evidence* produced in the *Houſe*; *transferring* the Legiſlative Power from the Parliament to the People, and thus *changing* a happy well poiſed *Conſtitution.*

Were this Practice to be repeated and carried, as it might be with equal Reaſon, to other Inſtances, it would *ſoon* prove *fatal.* There is no Tax more unequal than that laid upon *Land*; nor perhaps any *Complaints* better founded than of thoſe, who hold *ſmall Eſtates*, or who *don't live where their Eſtates lie.* And it perhaps deſerves Conſideration, whether, in ſome Counties, the Commiſſioners do not eaſe themſelves and lay diſproportioned Burdens upon their poorer Neighbours. The long Continuance of this unequal Tax, the immenſe Sums it has already con-

tributed to the Service of the Nation, and the Unreaſonableneſs of taxing landed Eſtates, in order that vaſt Sums of Money in the Funds, which produce better Intereſt, may not be ſubject to ſuch Payments: Theſe are *Arguments* that might be urged with great *Force* at a Time when the *Rents* of Land are *decreaſing* in ſo many Places. If upon theſe Arguments all the *Counties* and Boroughs in the Kingdom ſhould *enjoyn* their Members to vote againſt the Land Tax, ſhould libel and abuſe, ſhould threaten and inſult them if they did not obey theſe Commands, What muſt the Conſequence be? However this Treatment of Members may, as is boaſted, work above Ground and by Day Light, 'tis ſo far from being ſuch as the Conſtitution requires the Repreſented to have over their Repreſentatives, that, to ſpeak of it in the loweſt Terms, 'tis *introducing* a new Legiſlative Power. The *Opinion* of the People ought to be much *regarded*, but *poſitive Commands* may be very *prejudicial*, ſince they may command without having examined, being often governed by Authority without Proof.

The

The ſame that is ſaid with Relation to the Land-Tax, might be done in every other Tax or Duty ; they are all *unavoidably* attended with ſome *Trouble* and *Inconvenience*, which by proper Management may be repreſented as very dreadful. Perſons that are particularly affected or artfully inflamed, may command and threaten their Members, and worthy Gentlemen be abuſed for yeilding to the Force of Reaſon, and conſulting the true Intereſt of their *whole* Country. What muſt ſuch pernicious Meaſures end in but the Ruin of the Nation, while they unavoidably prevent raiſing the neceſſary Supplies, which can never be done without Inconvenience to ſome Perſons, who always diſlike a Tax that affects them in particular ?

'Tis ſaid indeed, by thoſe who adviſed theſe *authoritative* Injunctions, that in Affairs of *Domeſtick Government* the People underſtand them better than a *Miniſter of State* ; which would be leſs Matter of Diſpute, if *ſome Gentlemen* were in that Station. But does this ſuppoſed Knowledge empower them to *rule* the *Parliament*, either in domeſtick or foreign Affairs ? for the ſame Reaſoning holds

holds in both Caſes. When the *Deſigns* of an Enemy, or the *Poſture* of *publick Affairs* demand the Equipment of a *Fleet*, or providing a Number of *Land Forces*, Is the Safety of the Kingdom at theſe Junctures to depend upon the Judgment of Gentlemen that hear and know the State of Things, or upon the Opinion of thoſe who cannot have this Information? Of thoſe who it may be are *averſe* to the *Expence* of a Fleet or an Army, *only* becauſe, from the Nature of Government, they are *unacquainted* with the *Reaſons* that make them *neceſſary*; and ſo may prefer a preſent Saving, to their future Security and Wellfare? Of this there have been Inſtances. The Nation *ſuffered* greatly from an Experiment of this Sort in the *Reign* of *King William*; when the *Clamours* of a Party (*not yet quite extinct*) compelled that Great and Glorious Prince, who had but a little before ſaved them and their Country from Ruin, to *disband* a greater Part of his Troops than was conſiſtent with the true Intereſt of the Nation, according to the Poſture of Affairs, and the Diſpoſition of foreign Courts, as the Event ſoon proved to our Coſt. For the *Savings* upon that Occaſion

Occaſion muſt be allowed to have been *deeply over-ballanced* by an *expenſive* and *bloody* War, which was begun at a Time when the Nation was thought not prepared to make any vigorous Oppoſition.

Let Corporations enjoy, not only their legal Privileges, but *every* Inſtance of *Freedom* conſiſtent with the publick Good; but it can never be for their *own Advantage* to aſſume ſuch Powers as muſt change and ſubvert an excellent Conſtitution. Their Uſefulneſs and Importance to the Nation, the trading Part of them in particular, juſtly entitle them to great Regard and Favour: But ſtill, highly as I eſteem them, it would be too great a Compliment to ſuppoſe them infallible, not to be deceived by falſe Reports, or impoſed upon by artful and deſigning Men. Nor could it be any real Advantage to themſelves, to take them out of their own uſeful Sphere of acting, and place the Reins of Government in their Hands.

I have the greateſt Regard for the general Wiſdom of the *Engliſh* Nation, yet cannot wiſh to ſee publick Affairs wreſted

wreſted from the Parliament and placed in the promiſcuous Body of the People. To their *general Senſe* I ſhould always pay a Deference, but ſhould not ſo much approve their *Government*. Beſides the Inſtability and Uncertainty which we have ſeen attend ſuch popular Councils, the Perſons who compoſe them muſt be too ignorant of the general State of Affairs to be entruſted with the *important* Power of *Governing* the Government. Such Ignorance is unavoidable, unleſs Miniſters of State are to communicate their Diſpatches to the World, and our Enemies are at all Times to be acquainted with every Step we deſign againſt them.

Nor do *private* Perſons always underſtand the *general* State and Intereſt of the Nation enough to judge what Taxes are moſt proper. As to *Goods* imported from *Abroad*, it ſeems very ſufficient if they offer their *Opinion* and give their *Reaſons*, but leave the *Legiſlature* to determine what foreign Commodities ſhall be laid under Taxes, and in what Manner thoſe Taxes ſhall be collected. 'Tis abuſing the ſacred Name of Liberty to employ it to promote

mote *Licentiouſneſs* and deſtroy all true Freedom.

But theſe *authoritative* and abſolute *Injunctions* laid upon Members become ſtill more *abſurd* and *dangerous* when they are *enforced* by *Menaces* and *Tumults*. This was the next Step *adviſed* and encouraged by the *Leaders* of the Oppoſition. The *Dignity* as well as *Freedom* of Parliament is at an End when the Members of it are to be *menaced* or any way *inſulted* by tumultuous Crouds. There is ſomething ſo *horrid* in the very Thoughts of an *Aſſaſſination*, that it can hardly be ſuppoſed any Gentleman wiſhes the Populace had proceeded that Length; tho' *Parallels* have been *drawn* and *Inſtructions* given which naturally *carried* them to it. I am ſenſible the Merchants and Tradeſmen, moſt of whom, by the imaginary Terror of a General Exciſe, were prevailed upon to joyn the Oppoſition, deteſt the Thoughts of an Aſſaſſination, and are really concerned at Inſtances of Violence offered to Gentlemen of the Houſe of Commons. But there were *other* Perſons who had *other* Deſigns and *other* Wiſhes, why elſe were thoſe *dirty*

Patriots, the *Labourers* in *Glaſs-houſes* ſummoned to *aſſiſt* upon this Occaſion, and offer *their Advice* to the Members *at Night* when the peaceable Petitioners were gone Home? Whoever are the immediate Actors in ſuch a Tragedy, if any Violence is committed by a tumultuous Body of People, 'tis juſtly chargeable upon thoſe Men, whoſe *Advice* and *Pen* originally inflamed and brought them together. A mixt Multitude, many of them armed with Sticks and Swords (no uſual Part of their Dreſs) are ſoon thrown into a Riot. One raſh Blow by a Footman, in Reſentment of an Affront to his Maſter, the Rudeneſs and Violence of an enraged or a drunken Fellow, or the Artifice of thoſe who deſign Miſchief, may eaſily occaſion a Quarrel. And when once a Crowd is thrown into Confuſion, and a Fray began, no body can ſay how fatal the Conſequence may be before it is ended. Can ſuch tumultuous Aſſemblies, thus armed, be proper Aſſiſtants to the Deliberations of Parliament? Thoſe Gentlemen, whoſe *Writings* and *Advice* brought them to the *Door* of the *Houſe*, might

might with equal Propriety [illegible] duced them into the Houſe itſelf, and given them Seats as *Superintendants* of the Members. There is but little Difference whether ſuch Company enter the Houſe, or command and intimidate Gentlemen in their Paſſage to it. The Enemies of their Country, and the happy Form of its Government, would have taken the ſame Meaſures, and adviſed the like Violation of the Rights of Parliament, as theſe pretended Friends have done. Faction (as ancient *Rome* found to its Coſt) may prove as ſubverſive of a free Conſtitution, as Tyranny can be. 'Tis the Happineſs of our own in particular (if ſome *pretended* Friends to Liberty will allow us to enjoy it) to be governed by *Law*, and that only. Neither the abſolute Will of the Prince, nor the Will and Pleaſure of the People, but the *whole Legiſlature* is inveſted with ſupreme Authority. It ſhould be taken Notice of here, that even ſuppoſing the Bill not abſolutely perfect (and what human Scheme ever was ſo) yet it was but a meer Propoſal, it was ſtill *res integra*, having been read but once; any Alterations might have been made in the Com-

mittee. There was not the leaſt Reaſon to hazard the whole Conſtitution, when every Objection might have been obviated another Way.

'Tis but a Part of the Miſchief, which the Adviſers of theſe Diſorders have occaſioned, that the *Publick* has *loſt* all the *Savings* that might have been made, in ſome Shape or other, upon Articles of Trade ſo extenſive, and ſo liable to Frauds as Wine and Tobacco; which Savings would have given effectual Relief upon other Taxes.

This Loſs is only a Part of the Miſchief; the *Treatment* of the late *Bill*, and the *Methods* of Oppoſition then *recommended*, will effectually *encourage fraudulent Practices*, and *fruſtrate* all *Endeavours* to *prevent* them. Without much Spirit of Prophecy, a Man may venture to foretell, that whenever any Attempt ſhall be made to prevent Frauds, however hurtful and notorious, it will ſoon be obſtructed. A Method is marked out for the Purpoſe. 'Tis only raiſing a loud Outcry of Infringements of *Engliſh* Liberty, it muſt be called a Re-

vival of that dreadful Scheme, the Exciſe; new Ballads publiſhed in the Streets, and new Dragons hung up to affright the People.

That the Abettors of the late Diſturbances and Innovations in the Conſtitution meant only to diſtreſs the Adminiſtration, and not procure any real Benefit to the Kingdom, is farther evident from another Part of their Conduct, which was entirely to oppoſe the Method offered, not merely to correct its Faults, but abſolutely reject the whole, *without propoſing any other in its Room.*

This is a *Charge* at once ſo *heavy* and ſo juſt, that great Pains are taken to remove it. The *Anger* and *Uneaſineſs* they expreſs at the Imputation, plainly ſhew they feel both the *Weight* and the *Truth* of it. Frauds ſo *prejudicial* to the Publick ought to have had *ſome Check*, and their *injured Country* was juſtly entituled to *Relief.*

Inſtead of labouring ſo vigorouſly *ſolely* to diſcredit the Method propoſed, it had been very *proper* to have beſtowed a

few

few Thoughts to *find a better*. This muſt have been an *eaſy Task* to Gentlemen of *their Abilities*, who repreſent the *other* as extreamly *bad*. But let us hear their noble Defence. *The Gentlemen on the other Side* (ſay their great Leaders in the *Craftſman*) *having defeated the Exciſe Scheme, by their* VIGOROUS and PUBLICK-SPIRITED *Oppoſition, were reſolved to go farther, and purge themſelves from any Imputation of deſigning to countenance Frauds of any kind. For this Purpoſe it was propoſed by an honourable Member, that a Committee ſhould be appointed, with full Power to* INQUIRE *into the Frauds and Abuſes of the Cuſtoms in general.*

This, by the Bye, is another plain Confeſſion, that the Frauds in the Cuſtoms are ſo conſiderable as to deſerve the *Notice* of Parliament, however upon other Occaſions, the ſame Gentlemen endeavour to leſſen and deny them.

Vigorous enough their *Oppoſition* was; but all Mankind are at a Loſs to diſcover the *Publick-ſpiritedneſs* of *leaving* the *Nation under* the ſame acknowledged *Frauds*,

Frauds, and continuing Taxes rather than prevent thoſe Frauds. But this *vigorous* and *publick* Spirit did what? Bring in a better Bill? No; a Committee was propoſed *not* to *prevent* the Frauds, but to *inquire* into them! *As this Motion for a Committee* (ſay they in *another* Paper, being a Point they labour much) *proceeded from thoſe Gentlemen who had vigorouſly oppoſed the Exciſe Scheme, they have thoroughly purged themſelves from the Imputation of being the Patrons of Fraud.* How *thoroughly* the World will judge, when it is conſidered this is their *whole* Defence. They moved for a Committee to *enquire* into the Frauds. This Motion was made near the End of the Seſſions, when *Members*, fatigued with the cloſe Attendance of the Winter, were haſtening into the *Country*. The Gentlemen who value themſelves upon the Motion, well knew there was ſcarce time to draw up a Report, much leſs to form any Reſolutions upon it. There was therefore little Proſpect of Relief from this Step, and through the whole Courſe of this ſo much agitated Affair, *even to this Day*, they have made *no other* Propoſal to prevent theſe hurtful Frauds,

Frauds, except *disbanding the Army* to reſtrain the Inſolence of *Smugglers*, that *defy* the *Civil Magiſtrate*; and taking away *Patent Places* at the *Cuſtom-Houſe* to hinder Dealers from ſelling run Tobacco, and to prevent Brewing in Wine-Cellars, where Cuſtom-Houſe Officers have no Acceſs.

That there was no real Deſign to prevent unfair Practices, and that the Committee was not propoſed with that View, needs no other Proof, than the Declaration of *Gentlemen* who are certainly in the *Secret* of all their Meaſures. They, as well as the reſt of the World, were ſufficiently convinced of the Frauds *before* the Committee was appointed to enquire into them.

The Report, (ſay they again in the *Craftſman*) *conſiſts of little more than what appeared to the Houſe from the Commiſſioners of the Cuſtoms.* And were theſe Gentlemen on the other Side convinced of all the Frauds mentioned in the Report! Did they know how much the *Weight* at *Importation*, when the *Duty* was to be *paid*, was *leſs* than the

Weight

Weight at *Exportation* when the *Drawback* is to be *allowed?* Did they know that unfair Dealers might paſs the uſual Forms at the Cuſtom-Houſe, and gain more than Thirty Hogſheads Duty-free in the Cargo of a ſingle Ship? Did they know what appears ſo evident in the Report, how much the *Revenue*, the *fair Trader*, the poor *Planter*, *ſuffer* by theſe Frauds? That the *Trade* itſelf is *injured*, *Foreign Markets over-ſtock'd*, and the Tobacco ſold at an under Price, meerly for the ſake of getting an *unrighteous Drawback?* Did Facts of this Importance appear to the Houſe, and could thoſe Gentlemen in the Oppoſition think it a ſufficient Satisfaction to their Country, or a ſufficient Vindication of themſelves from *ſkreening* (ſince they like the Word) the moſt unjuſt Practices, that at ſuch an advanced Seaſon of the Year they moved for a Committee to acquaint them with what, by their own Confeſſion, they knew before? They propoſed no Remedy, not ſo much as obviating Frauds at Exportation, by *lodging* Tobacco to be exported in *publick Warehouſes*, and thereby preventing the *Inconveniencies* and groſs *Iniquities* in *Bonding*

ding for the Duty. Did theſe Gentlemen alſo know what *Quantities* of *Wine* were continually *run*? Were they, as well as the reſt of the Kingdom, convinced of the ſubterraneous Frauds committed by Wine-Brewers? What Remedy did they provide? One would imagine the Obligations *certain Gentlemen* are under to ſome fraudulent Dealers for pretty *Home Attempts* upon a *late* Occaſion, make them thus unwilling to enforce the Payment of Taxes. From the ſame Principle of *Gratitude* they tell us, (*Craftſman*, *Aug.* 4.) that *the Method of eaſing Land by taxing Commodities*, (it was too glaring an Abſurdity to ſay *Foreign Commodities*) *is only a* NOMINAL *Relief for the preſent, which will certainly end in a more grievous Burden upon Land* than any Land-Tax *whatever*. The Reaſon to be ſure for this Paradox, had they thought fit to give it, muſt have been this: A Man drinks what Wine he pleaſes, but is obliged to pay the full Tax for his Land whether he will or no. 'Tis therefore for his *Intereſt* and his Eaſe to pay the Land-Tax, rather than the Wine-

Wine-cooper ſhould pay the Duty which he receives for his made Wine.

By the Help of *ſuch Reaſoning*, the poor Planter muſt ſtill languiſh under the Oppreſſion of his Factor, and the Wine-cooper may *now*, with great *Tranquility*, continue *Brewing*, and levy upon his Neighbours thoſe Taxes he never pays. The *Penalty* of Frauds committed by the *Guilty* muſt ſtill be inflicted upon the *Innocent*. Some Friends, it ſeems, are upon no Account to be diſobliged. 'Tis to this Principle we owe another incomparable Piece of Reaſoning from the ſame Quarter, * *A People*, ſay they, *who pay in Taxes Five Millions* a Year, ſhould by no Means regard the Saving of *Five Hundred Thouſand Pounds*. Indifferent Perſons, though of a *lower Genius*, would have thought, that ſince the *unavoidable Intereſt* of the *National Debt*, and the *neceſſary Expences* of the current *Year* oblige us to pay ſo much, we have good *Reaſon* to be *exact* and *frugal* where we can.

* *Craftſman*, *Aug.* 4.

But agreeably to theſe *corrupt and all-skreening* Principles, they not only endeavour to *leſſen* the *Amount* of the Frauds, and reduce it from Five Hundred Thouſand Pounds (which they juſtly acknowledged when it ſerved their Turn) to ſo ſmall a Sum as Thirty Thouſand Pounds; but beſides this, they *labour* earneſtly to divert us *from* all *Methods* to *prevent* theſe Frauds. 'Tis with this View, when a fair and judicious Report from the Committee appointed to enquire into the Frauds of the Cuſtoms, was publiſhed, inſtead of naming a proper Method to prevent thoſe unjuſt Practices, as would become honeſt Patriots, they make a *dull* Attempt * to *criticiſe* the *Style* of the Report, and give a *fictitious* Account how that Committee was choſe. Nothing but a ſtrong Deſire to divert our Thoughts from the manifeſt Abuſes not rectified, could tempt *this Writer* to mention the *Choice* of the *Committee*, becauſe it muſt occur to his Thoughts, that a *certain Gentleman* will make a moſt *ridiculous Figure*, after he has ſo *publickly* declared againſt *patching*,

* Vid. *Craftſman, July* 28.

ing, as well as *skreening*, if it ſhould ever appear that *he* has been the Means of *skreening* very notorious *Frauds*, and was the *Contriver* of the *moſt motly* Liſt that ever ſaw the Light. A Liſt where *each Side* was extremely *aſhamed* of the *other*, and *excuſed* to their reſpective Friends, what they acknowledged of one another, the keeping ſuch very bad Company, alledging in their Defence, That no Company could be too bad to deſtroy a Miniſter, whoſe Merit had not only endeared him to ſucceſſive Princes, but procured him the *Eſteem* of the true *Friends* of the *Britiſh Conſtitution*, and of Courſe drew upon him the *united* Reſentments of *Jacobites* and *falſe Patriots*.

I have dwelt the longer upon the *Principles* and *Practices* of theſe Gentlemen in the Oppoſition, as they are pleaſed to call themſelves, that *impartial* People may *diſtinguiſh* the *real* from the *pretended* Friends of their Country and its happy Conſtitution. We have now ſeen the Maxims upon which each Party, in the late controverted Affair, proceeded. The Gentlemen

Gentlemen for the Bill thought it a commendable Attempt to raiſe ſome Relief to *honeſt* Men, by levying the juſt Taxes upon ſuch as are not ſo. Thoſe of the Oppoſition were reſolved *once more to puſh their Fortune*, and try if their utmoſt Art could not effectually diſtreſs their envied Rival. Invaſions of the Conſtitution, Violations of the Rights of Parliament, Encouragement of Fraud and Perjury, were to them no Obſtacles.

It may not be improper to carry on our Thoughts a little farther, and conſider the Succeſs of this vigorous Oppoſition, or, as themſelves are ſometimes pleaſed to call it, *this playing all the Game.*

The many artful Endeavours to terrify the People with the *groundleſs* Fear of a General Exciſe ſucceeded ſo well, that great Numbers became averſe to the Bill, as believing it, *without the leaſt Foundation*, introductory to ſuch a Scheme. What were at firſt only Doubts and Surmiſes, by frequent Repetition, acquired a greater Degree of Certainty. The Terror,

ror, however groundleſs in its Original, ſpread far and wide; and, as is the *Nature* of all ſuch *Panicks*, got deep Poſſeſſion of the People, and operated very powerfully upon them.

And now, what are we to expect from Gentlemen that loved their Country? Should they purſue a Scheme, becauſe they thought it good, when ſuch Numbers of their Countrymen were enraged againſt it? The *Queſtion* was now *altered:* It was *no longer* about the *Merits* of the Bill, whether Wine or Tobacco ſhould pay their proper Duty; but whether the Bill itſelf ſhould be farther conſidered when ſo many People (right or wrong) were greatly inflamed againſt it.

The Gentlemen therefore who meant only the publick Good, *gave up the Bill for ever*, rather than create any Hazard of publick Diſorders. They were conſcious the Bill was intended well, and ſtill convinced it might have been made very uſeful; but they *generouſly* choſe to ſacrifice their *own Sentiments* to, what they thought, the *miſtaken Opinion* of their Fellow-

Fellow-Subjects. In every Diviſion they had the *Numbers* on *their Side*. The Choice of the *Committee* by *Ballot* to enquire into the Frauds, when there was no Reſtraint or Terror, is a ſubſtantial Proof, notwithſtanding the Subterfuges of the *Craftſman*, of the real Strength they had in the Houſe. The Clamours upon *Bribery* and *Corruption* muſt be for ever ſilenced, or the Authors of thoſe Clamours acknowledge they might have been employed with equal Succeſs in this as in any other Cauſe. But the Gentlemen for the Bill *voluntarily* choſe to drop it, rather than hazard the publick Tranquillity. They *renounced* the *Triumph* of carrying a *diſputed* Point (*no uſual* Condeſcenſion from Men in Power) and yielded their own Opinion, how juſt ſoever they thought it, to the Prejudices of the People.

The *Reverſe* of this was found in *One* of their *Opponents*, the great Chief and Leader of them: He was deaf to the Cries of the *Poor*, when he taxed the very *Candles* by which ſo many of them *earned* their Bread. *Dunkirk* had been made

made *for ever harmleſs* to the *Britiſh* Nation, if the Senſe of the whole Kingdom could have altered his corrupt and treacherous Reſolutions.

The Gentlemen who propoſed the Bill, were actuated by *Sentiments* directly *oppoſite* to theſe. When they firſt formed the Plan, their *only* View was to remove ſome heavy Taxes; when they entirely *relinquiſhed* the Deſign, it was to convince the People of their *Regard* to publick *Peace*, and the *Deference* they paid even to *their* miſtaken Notions. The *Deſign* from which this Bill proceeded, the Eaſe of the People, was unqueſtionably *good*; and the *departing* from it, under ſuch Circumſtances, an Act of *ſingular Modeſty and Compliance*.

Such an *Example* is of great *Importance* in *Engliſh Hiſtory*, which furniſhes *too many* Inſtances, where Miniſters of State have purſued their Deſigns *againſt* the Senſe of the People. But the *Gentlemen*, who have thus *dropt* a Scheme, for which, as Authors of it, they could not want ſome Fondneſs, have *plainly*

Fellow-Subjects. In every Diviſion they had the *Numbers* on *their Side*. The Choice of the *Committee* by *Ballot* to enquire into the Frauds, when there was no Reſtraint or Terror, is a ſubſtantial Proof, notwithſtanding the Subterfuges of the *Craftſman*, of the real Strength they had in the Houſe. The Clamours upon *Bribery* and *Corruption* muſt be for ever ſilenced, or the Authors of thoſe Clamours acknowledge they might have been employed with equal Succeſs in this as in any other Cauſe. But the Gentlemen for the Bill *voluntarily* choſe to drop it, rather than hazard the publick Tranquillity. They *renounced* the *Triumph* of carrying a *diſputed* Point (*no uſual* Condeſcenſion from Men in Power) and yielded their own Opinion, how juſt ſoever they thought it, to the Prejudices of the People.

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ſhewed, that the *Peace* and *Favour* of their *Country* are the Objects of their *chief* Regard, and *predominate* in all *their* Meaſures.

Thus to *recede* from a Project, is ſo *contrary* to the *uſual* Practice of *Miniſters*, and yet may at ſome Junctures be very beneficial; that an *Inſtance* ſo *extraordinary*, to encourage the like upon other Occaſions, ſhould be *thankfully acknowledged* and *applauded*.

'Tis no Wonder, however, that thoſe who are fixed in their Oppoſition ſhould ſtill vigorouſly endeavour to deprive theſe Gentlemen of their juſt Praiſe, and ſtill labour to fix an unjuſt Odium upon them. It was thought poor Malice to kindle a Flame, unleſs proper Endeavours were uſed to make it ſpread. After Gentlemen had been *inſulted* at the *Parliament-Houſe*, the Adviſers of the firſt Diſturbance gave farther Directions to have them affronted in *Effigy* at diſtant Places; aiming at a *mean Triumph*, in this *pitiful* Way, over *One* whoſe diſtinguiſh'd Abilities and manly Eloquence give him an eaſy

eaſy Superiority in every *perſonal* Diſpute.

The Danger, had there been any, was *effectually over*; the Deſign *entirely* laid aſide. But the Nation was *ſtill* to be *inflamed*, and a Spirit of Diſorder kept up. This Behaviour furniſhes the true Reaſon, why a *few regular Forces* are ſo great a *Grievance*, and why *diſbanding* the *Army* is ſo *much inſiſted upon* by ſome Gentlemen. It likewiſe lets us into the true Reaſon of their deſiring the *Riot Act*, ſo uſeful in preſerving the publick Peace, to be *immediately repealed*.

'Tis not at all ſurpriſing, that Perſons who have taken ſuch Steps, and thus *violated* the *Privileges* of *Parliament*, ſhould next proceed to *attack* the Crown itſelf, and ſo diſcover an equal *Diſregard* for the *whole* Legiſlature.

Many of the beſt and greateſt Men this Nation ever bred, deſirous to *preſerve* the Conſtitution, endeavoured to fix it on that happy Baſis whereon it now ſtands. With what honeſt Zeal did theſe *true* Pa-

triots ſtruggle *for* the Proteſtant Succeſſion? What Joy did they receive from the Eſtabliſhment of it? Had their Lives been continued to this Time, how thankful would they have been to ſee their warmeſt Hopes exceeded? The Nation, in every Inſtance, governed by Law. The *Property* of the meaneſt Subject *ſecured* from all *Encroachments*. *Liberty*, both civil and religious, *preſerved* without any Violation. Not a ſingle Act of unlawful Power, nor one Attempt upon the Conſtitution, in the Courſe of many Years, except from thoſe diſcontented Subjects, who *alone* complain of its Danger. Is ſo happy a Government founded in *Reaſon*, conducted with *Equity*, and ſo *beneficial* to the Publick; Is this Government to be aſperſed and blackened, and do the Calumniators pretend to love their Country?

Under the Enjoyment of ſo *much Liberty* can any thing be more injurious and ungrateful, than to talk of *Slavery*, and level the *important Bleſſings* of the *Proteſtant Succeſſion* with the *Tyranny* of a *Popiſh Pretender!* Their own alarming Decla-

Declaration, *ſtamped* with *Authority*, and publiſhed by *Francklin*, fixes this Charge upon them. * *All we deſire*, ſay theſe *modeſt peaceable* Gentlemen, *is Juſtice and the common Protection of Subjects; but it is the Nature of* Engliſhmen, *if they muſt be* SLAVES, *they will be very* LITTLE SOLLICITOUS WHO ARE TO BE THEIR MASTERS. Their Meaning is *too obvious* to need an Explanation, and *too dreadful* to allow us to dwell upon it; it includes no leſs than the Deſtruction of every thing that is valuable to a free People, the abſolute Overthrow of that happy Conſtitution, and thoſe Liberties, both civil and religious, purchaſed with ſo much Blood and Treaſure. It ſhould only be remembered, to convince every Proteſtant *Engliſhman* what *they* aim at, that this *hopeful* Declaration was made *after* the *Bill* was *laid aſide*, and all the imaginary Danger from it over!

Merely becauſe a well-meant Deſign to relieve the Publick, by preventing Frauds, was not attended with Succeſs, nor any other propoſed in its Room, a tumultuous Joy

* *Letter from a Member of Parliament.*

Joy has been kindled through the Kingdom, and, by the *ſame Arts* that gave it Birth, continued ſtill in being. Gentlemen who have merited the higheſt Eſteem of their Country barbarouſly inſulted, and the valuable Bleſſings of the Proteſtant Succeſſion ſlighted and abuſed; nay, in Violation of all the Rights of Hoſpitality, a *Branch* of that *illuſtrious Houſe* which has been the great Bulwark of *civil* and *religious Freedom* in *Europe*, treated with *Indignity*. Sad Friends of Liberty! After all this, what do they do? Do they take *Shame* to themſelves, and ask *Pardon* of their injured Country? No, they ſtill endeavour to keep up *Noiſe* and *Tumults*; that the Voice of *Reaſon*, ſo powerful *againſt them*, may not be heard among the People.

Let theſe Gentlemen, if they pleaſe, continue to rejoyce and delight themſelves with *vain* Schemes of Power, and *imaginary* Proſpects of approaching Greatneſs; let them celebrate their own Praiſes, and *write* Letters of Applauſe to *themſelves*; let them do this or any thing, but *pretend* a *Hatred* of *Fraud* and Corruption, a

Deſire

Deſire to *leſſen* the Burden of *Taxes*, a *Regard* to the *Conſtitution*, or an *Intention* to preſerve the *Freedom* of Debate in *Parliament*. Were the Contrivers of theſe late Diſorders, the Gentlemen who hindered the Relief of their Country, enough at leiſure, one might adviſe them to moderate their Joy. It would be ſome Abatement of their ſhort-lived Triumph if they remember, that *Mobs* and *Riots*, though attended with ſome immediate Confuſion, often bring *Contempt* upon the Authors of them; and that even the inglorious Peace of *Utrecht* was celebrated with Bells and Bonfires.

Such *tumultuous Mirth* muſt of courſe be *noiſy*; while the Reflections of the *wiſe* and *ſober* part of Mankind, though *leſs publick*, are *more juſt* and *ſolid*, and will *at laſt*, when theſe ſhort-lived Tranſports are over, prove *more effectual*.

I have dwelt longer upon theſe high Inſults and dangerous Violations of the Conſtitution, becauſe the great *Adviſers* of them think proper to applaud ſuch Behaviour, and, as was obſerved before, propoſe

poſe it as an Example for other Opportunities.

We have now ſeen upon what *Principles* and with what *Deſigns* the late Bill, towards the *End* of a *Parliament*, was brought into the Houſe. The Gentlemen who were for it had *no other* View, but honeſtly to gain the Favour of their Country; which they hoped to do, if they could eaſe their Fellow-Subjects from the heavieſt of their Taxes, without any new Impoſitions, but merely by collecting, upon two foreign Commodities, the whole Duty from *unfair* Dealers, who, to a very conſiderable Value, now *defraud* the *Publick*.

This was their *whole Deſign*, and they *defy* the moſt malicious of their Enemies in the leaſt to contradict this by any *real Proof* or ſubſtantial Evidence. 'Tis impoſſible to prove a *Negative* which depends upon Gentlemens Intentions, any other way than by their ſolemn Aſſertions, and the Circumſtances of the Caſe. The altering the *Manner* of *collecting* a Duty already

already laid, is, in the Nature of things, widely different from laying a new Duty, and has not the leaſt Connexion with taxing *any other* Commodity. Miniſters, it is granted, *may* have ill Deſigns; but 'tis as true, that ill Deſigns *may* be *imputed* to Miniſters by *thoſe* who *want* their *Places*. Let Facts alone determine the Caſe.

'Tis poſſible the Gentlemen, who formed the Scheme, might be miſtaken; but ſure *no Miſtake* can be *more innocent*; none proceed from *better* Purpoſes. Here were *no private Views*, no perſonal Advantage, no particular Friends to oblige: On the contrary, their *Intereſt* lay on the *other* Side; a Connivance at the Abuſes they deſigned to prevent, might have produced a plentiful Harveſt to Men in Power: The Publick *alone*, that is, all who now pay other Taxes, and they only, were to receive any Profit from this Scheme. Nothing but much Trouble, Vexation and Oppoſition could poſſibly fall to the Lot of the Authors of it. The only Reward they hoped for was the Approbation of the virtuous Part of their Country.

When this Plan, however *well deſigned*, and by *many* of its Oppoſers *little underſtood*, proved diſagreeable to great Numbers of the Trading Subjects, the Gentlemen who were for it, *without diſcerning* any thing *wrong* in the Thing itſelf, ſubmitted their own Opinion to the Sentiments of their Countrymen.

'Tis impoſſible for Men to give a more ſubſtantial Proof of Regard to the Intereſt of their Country, than theſe Gentlemen have ſhewed by propoſing a Scheme of this Tendency, at the Expence of their own Quiet: Nor can there be *clearer Evidence* that they *abhor* the Thoughts of carrying on Affairs by *mere Power*, than the *yielding up* their *Sentiments*, how right ſoever they thought them, to the Opinion of *other* Perſons, even when they had a Majority in the Houſe, and would certainly have carried the Point by greater Numbers had the Matter been decided by Ballot.

Thus they have proved to the People of *England*, that it is their *firm* Reſolution

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tion to do *nothing* againſt the *general Bent* of the Nation. In a long Courſe of Years, they have *always* acted upon the Principles of *Liberty*, and always conſidered the Subjects of *England* as a *free People*. It has fallen under every Body's Obſervation, that they have diſcovered *leſs* Violence and Obſtinacy even while they are *in Power*, which is commonly impatient of Contradiction, than their *Adverſaries* have done while they are *deſtitute* of it.

Every *Engliſhman* therefore, in proportion as he loves his Country, will *dread* to ſee Power and Authority lodged in *ſuch* Hands; who, while no more than *private Men*, have by the moſt *unuſual* and *daring* Practices endangered the whole Conſtitution. Power would quite intoxicate Perſons who are already ſo warm and outrageous, and, what deſerves our Notice, ſo *cloſely blended* with *thoſe* who were *bred up* in *Principles* of *Tyranny*.

The Wiſdom of the *Engliſh* Nation will, at a *proper* Time, effectually *diſtinguiſh thoſe* who have always approved themſelves Friends to the Liberty of their

Country; on whom, by long Experience we find, Power has had no other Effect, but to make them more earneſt to preſerve the Conſtitution: Thoſe, who with great Trouble and Hazard endeavoured the Relief of their Country; but yet ſhewed themſelves not too fond of their own Scheme, but *gave it up for ever* to the Opinion of *others*, and with great Condeſcenſion yielded even to the Prejudices of their Countrymen.

Theſe Gentlemen will always be diſtinguiſhed from ſuch as *oppoſed* the *Relief* of their Country, without endeavouring to mend a Scheme offered for that Purpoſe, or *propoſing* any *other* in its Room; who with a *Violence* highly *dangerous* to the Publick, *broke* in upon the *Conſtitution* and *invaded* the *Rights* of *Parliament*, who have effectually *ſkreened* great and acknowledg'd Frauds, and given a *publick* Encouragement to *Perjury* and *Corruption*; who, even while they are out of Power, and courting publick Favour, ſo far *diſregard* the *unanimous Senſe* of the *Nation*, as to *act* in cloſe *Concert* and even *avow* their *Conjunction* with

THAT MAN, who has effectually *obtained* the *univerſal Abhorrence* he has taken ſo much pains to *deſerve*; *one* that will teach them, by his own *ſtrong Example*, to *deſpiſe* the *Sentiments* of the *People*, when he reminds them, That, after he had reſolved by *one* effectual Stroke to *ruin* for ever the *Trade* of his Country, He obſtinately purſued his deſtructive *Plan of Commerce* againſt the Remonſtrances of *Friends*, the unanimous Opinion of the *People*, and even againſt the declared Senſe of the *Parliament* itſelf: That, not the moſt *general* and tender Sympathy from every *Engliſh* Breaſt, *united* with the *Cries* of *Europe*, could draw back his cruel and relentleſs Hands, from enſlaving and then murdering the poor faithful CATALANS, *a free People*, whom the Sacred Faith of the *Britiſh* Nation was ſolemnly plighted to preſerve for ever free.

FINIS.

THAT MAN, who has effectually defeated
the Enterprize he has taken so
much pains to deserve; one that will teach
them, by his own Example, to de-
serve the Favours of the People, when
he rewards them. That after he had re-
solved by one effectual Stroke to rid for
ever the Yoke of his Country, He calm-
ness purged his declaring Plan of
Conscience against the Promptitude of
Private, the unanimous Opinion of the
People, and even against the declared
Sense of the Parliament itself: That, not
the most general and tender Sympathy
from every English Breast, mixed with
the Cries of Europe, could draw
his cruel and relentless Hands, from em-
bruing and then inundating the
faithful CATALANS
the Sacred Rites of the
was solemnly pledged
ever true.

FINIS.